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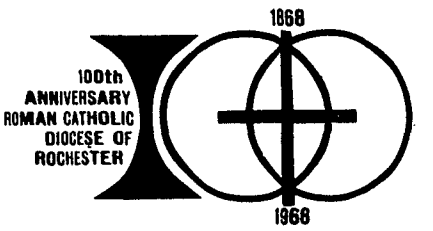
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Pope Bans All Contraceptives; Encyclical Affirms Church Law

By JAMES C. O'NEIL
(NC News Service)

Vatican City — Pope Paul VI this week confirmed the traditional teaching of the Catholic Church of family regulation and has reaffirmed the rejection of every form of artificial birth control.

In an encyclical, dated July 25 and entitled *Humanae Vitae*, from the two Latin opening words, meaning *Of Human Life*, Pope Paul insisted on the norm of natural law that "each of every marriage act must remain open to the transmission of life."

The exercise of responsible parenthood, the Pope said, implies "that husband and wife recognize fully their own duties towards God, towards themselves, towards the family and towards society in a correct hierarchy of values."

"In the task of transmitting life, therefore, husband and wife are not free to proceed completely at will, as if they could determine in a wholly autonomous way the honest path of God, impressed in the very nature of marriage and of its acts and manifested by the constant teaching of the Church."

While not "every conjugal act is followed by a new life... nonetheless the Church, calling men back to the observance of the norms of the natural law, as interpreted by her constant doctrine, teaches that each and every marriage act must remain open to the transmission of life."

Pope Paul acknowledged that "it can be foreseen that this teaching will perhaps not be easily received by all: too numerous are those voices — amplified by modern means of propaganda — which are contrary to the voice of the Church."

However, he answered: "To tell the truth the Church is not surprised to be made, like her Divine Founder, a 'sign of contradiction'; yet because of this she does not cease to proclaim with humble firmness the entire moral law, both natural and evangelical."

The pontifical decision, "which makes no concession to popularity, is an act of great courage and an example of perfect serenity," according to Msgr. Fernand Lambruschini who presented the encyclical at a press conference.

The Pope firmly asserted that he was speaking out on the subject by virtue of the power entrusted by Christ to Peter and the Apostles and their successors. When Christ entrusted the Church to these, Pope Paul said, "he constituted them as guardians and authentic interpreters of all the moral law, not only that, is, of the law of the Gospel but also of the natural law, which is also an expression of the will of God, the faithful fulfillment of which is equally necessary for salvation."

The Pope devoted much attention to the demands of conjugal love and responsible parenthood which have been advanced by supporters of a change in past teaching. Conjugal love, said the Pope, "reveals its true nature and nobility when it is considered in its supreme origin, God, who is love..."

The encyclical likewise repeats approval of non-artificial means of regulating family growth, the rhythm system and periodic abstinence, but always with good reasons.

In rejecting artificial birth control, the Pope pointed to some of the grave consequences of the use of such means, among them "how wide and easy a road would thus be opened up toward conjugal infidelity and the general lowering of morality. The young who are so vulnerable on this point have need of encouragement to be faithful to the moral law."

"It is also to be feared that the man, growing used to the employment of anti-conceptive practices, may finally lose respect for the woman. No longer caring for her physical and psychological equilibrium, he may come to the point of considering her as a mere instrument of selfish enjoyment and no longer as his respected and beloved companion."

Pope Paul acknowledged that the teachings of the Church on this subject seem difficult and appear to many to be impossible to adhere to.

However, he answered: "The honest practice of regulation of birth demands first of all that husband and wife acquire and possess solid convictions concerning the true values of life and of the family and that they tend toward securing perfect self-mastery."

To doctors and other scientists Pope Paul repeated the appeal of Pope Pius XII that "medical science succeed in providing a sufficiently secure basis for a regulation of birth founded on the observance of natural rhythms."

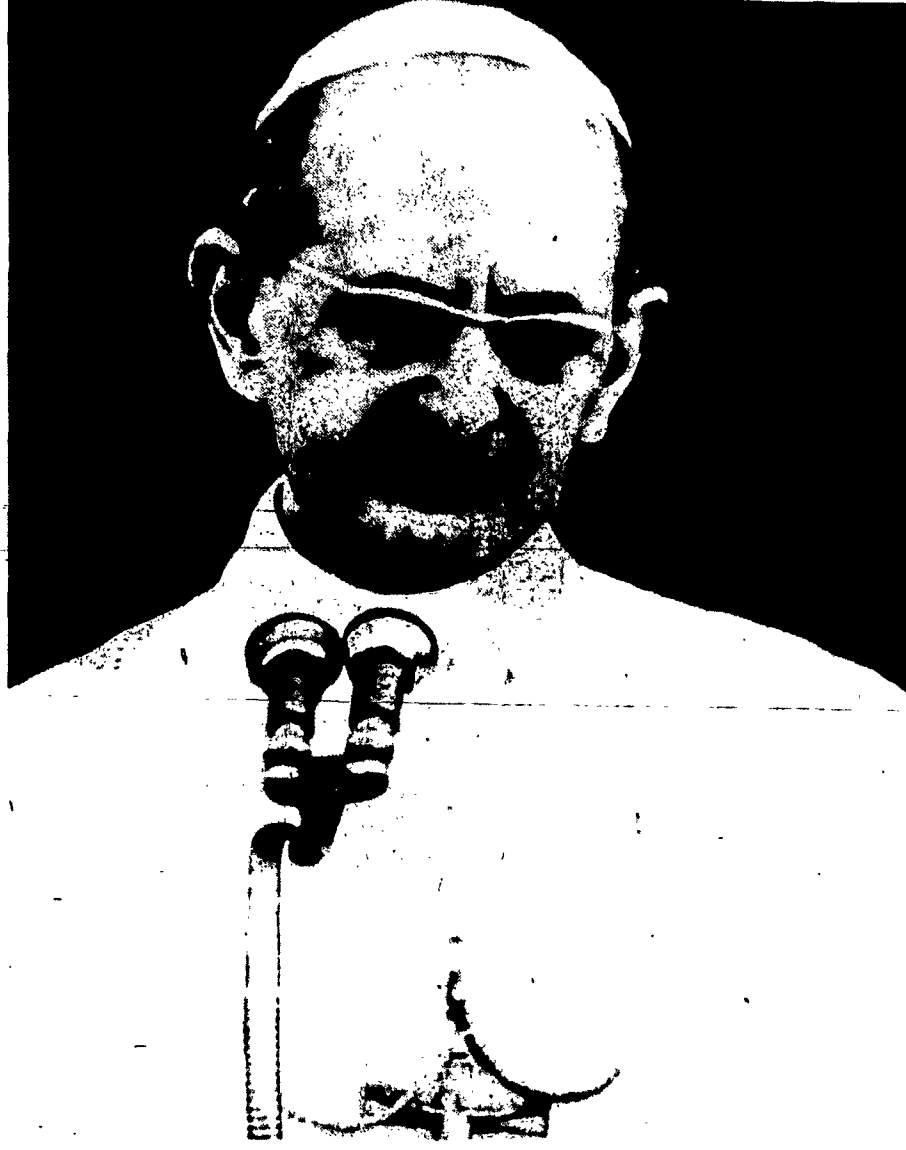
To married couples the Pope said let them "face up to the efforts needed by the faith and hope... let them implore divine assistance by persevering prayer and above all let them draw from the source of grace and charity in the Eucharist."

"And if sin should still keep its hold over them let them not be discouraged but rather have recourse with humble perseverance to the mercy of God which is poured forth in the sacrament of Penance."

To the Church's priests, Pope Paul addressed a very personal and pointed appeal. "Be the first to give in the exercise of your ministry the example of loyal internal and external obedience to the teaching authority of the Church."

"You know too that it is of the utmost importance for the peace of consciences and for the unity of the Christian people that in the field of morals as well as in that of dogma, all should attend to the magisterium (teaching authority) of the Church and all should speak the same language."

The complete text of Pope Paul's encyclical will be found in a pull-out sheet after page 12 for easy reading and saving.



Pope Paul VI speaking to a crowd at his summer residence at Castel Gandolfo on July 28 the day before the Vatican released the text of his encyclical "Of Human Life" in which the Pontiff reaffirmed the Church's traditional teaching on birth control.

US Theologians Dispute Force of Encyclical

Washington — (NC) — U.S. theologians from colleges and seminaries across the country fell into public dispute this week over the interpretation of Pope Paul's ban on artificial birth control.

The President of the Theological Society of America disagreed with the Vice President and some 87 members of the group.

Msgr. Austin Vaughan of St. Joseph's Seminary, Dunwoodie, N.Y., president of the society, said: "The encyclical eliminates the confusion over just what the Church is teaching at the moment."

"Any decision coming after this long wait," Msgr. Vaughan commented, "was bound to cause problems for some people. It may pose problems for theologians who have been arguing that traditional arguments against contraception were no longer valid in our day."

A panel of ten theologians led by Father Charles E. Curran, (Rochester Diocese), associate professor of theology at Catholic University, prepared and released a statement signed by 87 teaching scholars dissenting from Pope Paul's encyclical and asserting that Catholics may continue to follow their own conscience on the matter.

The theologians noted that the papal letter on "Human Life" was "not an infallible teaching" and declared that "spouses may reasonably decide according to their conscience that artificial contraception is permissible and indeed necessary to preserve the values and sacredness of marriage."

While Msgr. Vaughan said that the new encyclical "set forth clear cut guidelines for the faithful to follow", the theologians who deplored the papal ruling stated: "It is common teaching in the Church that Catholics may dissent from authoritative, non-infallible teachings of the magisterium when sufficient reasons for doing so exist."

Their statement said: "The encyclical consistently assumes that the Church is identical with the hierarchical office and ignores the 'witness' of the total Christian community."

The theology society president insisted that the Pope's statement would "call for greater stress on the positive values of Christian faith and family life". The dissenting group criticized the birth control encyclical for the "ecclesiology implied and the methodology used by Pope Paul in promulgating the document."

the sermon is part of the liturgical service and should draw its content mainly from scriptural sources.

SUGGESTION: Since there are no restrictions on the homily, pastors should make it a point to relate a certain percentage to things laymen (and priests alike) choose as their own informal topics of conversation. A guideline might present itself in the questions priests hear at such occasions as dinner in a layman's home. Questions that often start "What does the church think of...?"

As for the liturgy, there seemed to be an almost unanimous approval of the trends established by Vatican II.

Laymen generally rejoice in "really taking part" in the liturgy despite some reservations about the singing and some wistfulness for the "old-time" Latin Mass.

SUGGESTION: Keep up the good work of gradual renewal but is it possible to schedule in advance and advertise in the bulletin an occasional Latin Mass in deference to older church-goers? Also churches who have not joined those that have offered processions and lay reading

(Continued on Page 15)

Bishop Sheen Praises Pope Paul

"He Dared To Oppose the World"

Psychology teaches: "Whatever is received, is received according to the nature and the psychological outlook of the one receiving it".

Black absorbs light and white reflects it. Pour water into a blue glass and the water looks blue; pour it into a red glass and the water looks red; pour it into a crystal glass and the water appears in its true nature.

The words of Our Lord from the Cross, "Father, forgive them," kindled great hate in the thief on the left, but it converted the thief on the right. Seed falling on a highway does not act the same way as seed on fertile ground.

So it is with a Papal restatement on the Sacredness of Life. Those who condemned the Holy Father for not speaking out, will now condemn him because he has spoken out.

The blue souls will now sing the "blues", the "red" souls will now see "red", for their minds were already made up. But crystal souls will accept the decision for many reasons, one of which is this:

Here is a man, who like Athanasius, dared oppose the world. Some secular minds are in favor of controlling the levers of life. But Paul dared oppose the world, for which he will be crucified, not only by the world itself but by some ecclesiastics, as was Christ on Calvary. "If the world hates you, it hated Me first, as you know well." John 15/18)

A dead body will float down stream: it takes a live body to resist it.

If for no other reason than his courage to oppose mass demand for the frustration of life, he will appeal to those who want a Voice to say what is right, not when the world is right, but even when the world is wrong.

To hold the fort, to trumpet out a call to holiness against raging blasts, is heroism from victimhood.

Paul could be the most popular man in the world, if he gave to man the control of life's begetting, but now he will be the touch-stone, the litmus paper, the moment of truth for all who claimed he was their shepherd.

He knows that if total control of life's beginning is given to man, that the control may be exercised at any moment during duration.

His attitude may be that of Father Tche who was assured by the Chinese Communists on June 2, 1951, that if he denied the Pope, he would be spared. "No," he answered, "because tomorrow you will ask me to deny Christ."

At one moment in his life, Peter warmed himself by the fire while Christ was being condemned. But this is the moment when Peter will be crucified upside down, for the sake of the Crucified.

Every now and then in history there are crises or tests of faith. Formerly, they belonged to the order of dogma, such as the Divinity of Christ, the necessity of grace for frustrated man, and a historical succession from the apostles.

Today the test is in the field of morals and is intimately related to two dominant ideas in the modern world: The Death-Wish and Violence.

The Death-Wish is in the song of the young, the increase of suicidism, the flight from life and the mechanical smashing of the infinitely small — the atom — to smash the infinitely great — the cosmos.

Violence is the laying of hands on life, either to maim it, to destroy it, or to annul it.

Knowing how much the Death-Wish has enchained minds, and Violence has terrorized life, the civilized world listens to man who opposes both in the name of nature, and in the name of love, and elucidates for our age what is necessary for salvation. Conscience without the continuing presence of Christ in the Church is much like the smell of perfume that remains in an empty bottle.

Catholics are now at the Cross Roads. They have already agreed with the Council that the Church is the "mystery of salvation for the whole world".

Now that belief becomes concretized, not on the subject of the Trinity as it was 1500 years ago, but on the subject of Sex. (Does this represent upward evolution or downward devolution?)

Many are in the position of the first Christians who were praying in the house of John Mark. Peter was released from prison. He kept knocking to get into his community of the faithful, but Rhoda, who answered the knock, thought it was a "ghost". She could not believe it was Peter.

So today, some in the Church hear the knocking, and hear the word of God. They are told that it is the unmistakable voice of Peter, and yet they say "No, — it is a dream", "an angel", a voice from the past", "moral authority outside of the ego no longer holds", "the Magisterium is in doubt".

They make distinctions between the "voice" and the "presence", between the "fact" and its "meaning", between the "Peter" and his "ghost".

But Peter continues knocking. While many on the inside shut their ears to his voice and invent comfortable reasons to escape admitting him, he still calls. As a fisherman, he had learned patience. He knows his own.

He comes burdened with the cares of the world, and sad like the Father of the Prodigal, is waiting for his children to come back. May we who have been blessed by faith know him that knocks at our conscience, for he is actually the Door-Keeper with the Keys of Heaven.

The Lord once spoke of a truth which made the worldly followers complain: "Your words are hard and who can believe them", and some left. The Lord then turned to Peter — "Do you also want to leave Me?"

From Peter's heart and from the hearts of all of us, in these days of "hard sayings" we answer: "To whom shall we go. You have the words of Eternal Life".



ON THE INSIDE

Around the Country	5
Around the World	4
Commentary	16
Diocesan	7
Editorial	6
Entertainment	11
Pat Answers	7
Women	8

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Laymen's Survey Offers Suggestions

By CARMEN VIGLUCCI

After talking with dozens of laymen in the Diocese, it is evident that three things concern them the most about their parish activities:

1. The financial operations.
2. The sermons.
3. The liturgy.

Although the Courier-Journal survey is strictly unofficial and doesn't purport in any way to be a scientific poll, it does show what a random selection of laymen say about issues in random conversation.

On finances the laymen interviewed felt they should know more about their parish's fiscal operations than just an annual report of how much money goes to the Pastoral Office.

He wants to know almost precisely what the Pastoral Office does with its donation called the Quarterly Diocesan collection. How much goes to the Urban Ministry, for instance, or to alleviate poverty in the Diocese, what amount helps this nation's poor, how much goes overseas? How much goes to diocesan education, including the two seminaries? How much do the Newman Clubs at secular colleges receive?

Many parishes have already taken steps to soothe the laity. There are parish boards, parish councils, etc. At least one parish has a layman give the annual financial message, the week following the pastor's yearly spiritual report.

SUGGESTION: The Pastoral Office disseminate either in church bulletins or in the Courier-Journal an annual budget. In addition, as this paper had urged editorially, an illustrated brochure should be sent to every family in the diocese explaining where the money goes in each Quarterly Diocesan collection.

On sermons, most of those interviewed felt they should be keyed more to the problems of modern life, particularly the race, hunger and poverty issues.

Others who voiced dissatisfaction with the type homily rendered in the diocese felt they should deal more with spontaneous, everyday topics such as current and controversial movies, books, news.

The Courier-Journal pointed out that although diocesan priests have freedom to write their own sermons that it has been a trend to adhere to the teachings of Vatican II that